

It is for that reason Mr. Speaker I strongly support H.R. 5633.

It will hold all decision makers accountable and force their actions to be submitted not only to Congress, but the court of public opinion as well.

This bill prioritizes both transparency and accountability, so I urge my colleagues to support this critical piece of legislation.

REPORTING EFFICIENTLY TO
PROPER OFFICIALS IN RE-
SPONSE TO TERRORISM ACT OF
2021

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1540, the Reporting Efficiently to Proper Officials in Response to Terrorism Act of 2021 or the REPORT Act.

The purpose of this bill is to provide reports to Congress that are jointly developed by relevant federal agencies regarding incidents of terrorism.

This bill requires the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, whenever an incident of terrorism occurs in the United States, to submit to Congress an unclassified report upon completion of the investigation by the primary U.S. government agency conducting the investigation concerning the incident.

The report should contain:

1. A statement of the facts of the incident that are known at the time of the report.
2. Any recommendations for changes in practices or law, consistent with the Constitution, with particular attention to changes that could help prevent future incidents of terrorism.

The bipartisan bill requires the Department of Homeland Security, the Justice Department, the FBI, and/or the National Counterterrorism Center to work together to submit a report to Congress after a foreign or domestic terrorist attack, which must include an explanation of what happened, any gaps in national security, and recommendations for additional measures to improve homeland security and prevent future terrorist attacks.

After a terrorist attack, federal agencies will be required to report to Congress with information about exactly what happened and recommendations to prevent future attacks.

The first priority of government should be making sure that all Americans are safe, secure, and free.

The 9/11 attack on American soil on September 11, 2001 took the lives of nearly 3,000 innocent civilians and since that day, the role of virtually every federal, state, and local law enforcement agency changed.

The 9/11 attack remains a tragedy that defines our nation's history. But the final chapter will be written by those who are charged with keeping our nation and people safe while preserving the way of life that terrorists sought to change.

On January 6, 2021, during a joint session of Congress, a mob breached the U.S. Capitol, illegally entering the complex, violent par-

ticipants, incited by the former President's rhetoric, injured scores of D.C. Police and U.S. Capitol Police officers—killing one, while four civilians also died.

The escalation in violent domestic attacks since the January 6 attack has been felt by our nation's law enforcement officers, as well as others which is evidenced by the rise in murder and assaults across the nation.

Today, we find ourselves in a nation where the terrorism landscape is more complex, it is imperative that we recognize and communicate the evolving and unorthodox nature of the terrorism threats we face today.

This bill is the most effective way for us to protect our country through solid reporting and communicating.

To prevent terrorist attacks and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in responding to an attack, agencies need to coordinate with each other to determine what went wrong so that we can strengthen our counterterrorism efforts moving forward.

Congress must have all available information to make the most informed policy decisions following a terrorist attack.

The REPORT Act ensures that members of Congress will receive the full accounting of the facts, so that they can hold federal agencies accountable.

Information sharing with both Congress and the American people, is a vital element of preventing, and responding to, terrorism.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 1540 because our mission has been and will continue to be focused on preventing and preparing for all issues surrounding terrorism.

We owe a debt to those who have lost their lives and we must do all that we can to prevent another attack on United States soil.

DHS ILLICIT CROSS-BORDER
TUNNEL DEFENSE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4209, the "Department of Homeland Security Illicit Cross-Border Tunnel Defense Act."

This bill authorizes for FY2022 and FY2023 U.S. Customs and Border Protection activities to identify and close tunnels criminals use to illegally cross our Southern Border.

This bill also directs the Customs and Border Patrol to develop and report to Congress a strategic plan to improve tunnel closures.

According to Customs and Border Patrol, Cross-border tunnels are dug by transnational criminal organizations to smuggle contraband into the U.S. from neighboring countries. Current detection capabilities rely on random tips and the laborious collection of human intelligence (HUMINT).

When tunnels are discovered, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement have limited ability to access the tunnel to arrest and prosecute those involved in creating and using the tunnel.

The reason behind such limited ability is because Customs and Border Patrol lack the needed fiscal resources needed to combat

tunnel construction and usage. This bill aims to ameliorate that problem.

Mr. Speaker, after considering statements from Customs and Border Patrol, it is clear that people seeking a better life do not use illegal tunnels to achieve such ends. The tunnels are instead used by those seeking to wreak havoc and bring crime into our communities, with no other purpose.

For example, upon discovery of a 183-foot-long subterranean tunnel in Mexicali, Baja California, near the international border, Cardell T. Morant, special agent in charge of HSI San Diego said, "These types of tunnels enable drug traffickers to conduct illicit activities virtually undetected across the U.S.-Mexico border."

Morant continued, "Discovering and shutting down these tunnels deals a major blow to drug trafficking organizations because it denies them the ability to smuggle drugs, weapons and people across the border."

That tunnel had an entrance measuring 12 feet by 10 feet and extended 3 feet north of the international border wall but had no exit on the U.S. side of the border, apparently creating temporary exits on an ad hoc basis.

The Drug Trafficking Organization who designed it equipped the tunnel with electricity, ventilation, a rail system with a cart, and an electric hoist.

Mr. Speaker, these tunnels, even if they are only open for a short period, can allow traffickers to move massive amounts of drugs, humans, currency, and firearms back-and-forth between Mexico and the United States.

As Chair of the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Committee, I am committed to ensuring our internal and homeland security. Fighting these criminals at every turn is critical to achieving of that objective, and this bill provides the CBP additional tools for that purpose.

I am therefore proud to support H.R. 4209, the "Department of Homeland Security Illicit Cross-Border Tunnel Defense Act" and urge my colleagues to as well.

DHS TRADE AND ECONOMIC
SECURITY COUNCIL ACT OF 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4476, the "Department of Homeland Security Trade and Economic Security Council Act of 2021."

This bill establishes the DHS Trade and Economic Security Council, which shall provide trade and economic security advice and recommendations to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

This includes identifying high priority risks and setting priorities for protecting the nation's trade and economic security.

The bill also establishes the position of Assistant Secretary for Trade and Economic Security within DHS's Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans.

Mr. Speaker, the mission of the Department of Homeland Security is to secure the nation from the many threats we face.

Those threats encompass not only threats abroad but also at home, and our economic security is integral to national security.